

## Modern Public Health

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PROPERTY OF THE DIVISION OF HYGIENE  
AND PUBLIC HEALTH  
DO NOT REMOVE FROM READING ROOM

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## Introduction

"Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack

Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.

Where is the foe that ever saw their back?

Who can so well the toil of war endure?

Their native fastnesses not more secure

Than they in doubtful time of troublous need;

Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,

When gratitude or valour bids them bleed,

Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead." \*

So wrote Byron (Lord) of that stalwart race which inhabits the rugged but incomparatively or incomparably beautiful highlands, fertile valleys, and wooded uplands, of Albania. "It is a quick witted race, with keen aesthetic perception, a feudal sense of honour, and above all an individualism which shows itself in moral and intellectual originality. It is a race worth saving."

Albania holds the most important strategic and geographical position on the Adriatic; and that it is the master key to the Near East, and that it has been the scene of many celebrated exploits (in Roman times), and that it is only 39 miles from Italy; yet the idea of it as a rising power is very slowly being recognized. This region, formerly severely suppressed by the Ottomans for over 450 years, ought to be the lone striking evidence that "the sons of the Mountain Eagle" as they call themselves, should not be deprived of being recognized; as the pure representatives of the "Illustrious Illyrians". #

\*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto the Second. Verse LXV.

#Key to the Near East by Christo Dako.

In a speech to the cabinet , on December 2, 1929, his Honor, the King Zog of Albania, said that he was going to make a grant of money to be spent purely for fighting malaria--which is a great drawback to Albanians, and which accounts for the lethargy of many of the inhabitants of the lowlands, and for improving the sanitation of the country as a whole. For this purpose, foreign experts would be engaged. In addition to the riddance of Malaria, he also authorized the cabinet for the appointment of an advisor to assist the Ministry of Education. With regards to Public health, his Honor stated three battalions of recruits would be detailed for road construction. In addition, all males of the country were to be compelled to give six days of labour to road construction, unless able to pay a tax of 20 gold franks, equivalent to about \$9 to 10 (dollars), for exemption.\*

A medical expert appointed by the League of Nations of which she is a member, to visit the country and investigate hygienic and sanitary conditions, and to recommend measures to improve them.\*

"Albania", wrote Gibbon, "is a country within sight of Italy which is less known than the interior of America". Ten to fifteen years ago, Albania was scarcely known to the outside world, and it is that very fact that induces many travelers to go there and find for themselves the real Albania, for one can never attain the truth about a nation without having gone and made observations of some sort. Therefore, Americans as well as Europeans, should never draw conclusions from biased and non-biased literature that is printed from time to time in our American papers and magazines. So, it is my ultimate hope, that with the writing of this brief history of Albania from diverse angles, shall be conveyed the real picturesque Albania, and of the valiant Albanians who have so long endured invasion after invasion and have finally emerged independent, as the pure representatives of the illustrious Illyrians, the "sons of the mountain eagle".

\*Albania the Rise of A Kingdom by J.S. Swire; pp. 402, 464.

In this short treatise, I have traced the political history of Albania thru the ages, the economic conditions, the language and literature, and the Public Health conditions, only limitedly because there can be written countless pages on such a country, the Switzerland of the Balkans.

I am highly indebted to the Albanian Ministry of Health for the valuable information which they sent me on request, and to various authors whose books will be cited in the bibliography, at the end of this treatise.

For any misconstrued statements that I may have made in the writing of this paper, I beg to be forgiven rather generously, since the English language is but an acquired one---of only a few years.

Joseph Alli

Who are the Albanians? The name Albanians was given first in the 11th century by the Greeks of the lower empire to the tribe inhabiting Albasan or Elbasan. Later it was extended to all those who spoke the same language as that of the original inhabitants of Albasan, from the Italians derived the word Albania, and gave it to the rest of Europe. "Albania" and "Albanians" (terms) are not known among the descendants of the early citizens of Albasan. Those whom the rest of the world calls "Albanians" know themselves as "Shqipe-tare" and the country in which they live as "Shqiperia" or "Shqyp-nia". These people are generally in all probability accurately identified as the result of the combination of the ancient Illyrians, Macedonians, and Epirotes, who were all the descendants of the ancient Pellasgians.

Yet at the Congress of Berlin, in 1878, Bismarck is quoted to have said "there is no Albanian nationality". When such a statement was made, the people within the confines of that "Geographical expression" were just beginning to awake to their national consciousness. Since then, fifty years have passed and the freedom is ours at last, and the little Albania altho attenuated in order to gratify the bordering neighbors, and weakened by the blood shed for freedom, and mourning the loss of the most prosperous lands and towns, strove to take an honorable place among the states of Europe; and we finally succeeded. A race from which sprang so many of the Roman Emperors, and in more recent years such celebrities as Mehmet Ali Pasha, Admirals Miaoulis and Condouriotis, Marko Bochari, Repoulis, Crispi, and no less than twenty other Grand Viziers, and a host of other famous men.

There are few, if any, races in Europe whose passage thru the ages has been more stormy than that of the Albanians. Yet despite differences of religion, social system, dialect and subdivision of race, historical events which seldom affected all alike, the machinations of their neighbors, conquests which never forced them apart, / the suppression by the Turks for over 450 years of any movement of a national character, and the absence since the death of Skenderbeg, the national hero etc. the Albanians have preserved the racial individuality, language and love of freedom.

The Albanian race in fact descends back to the earliest Aryan immigrants, and in later times it was represented by the Thraco-Illyrians and Epirots or Pelasgians as I stated above, and who inhabited the whole of the Balkan Peninsula between the Danube and the Aegean Sea. Undoubtedly some proportion of that civilization which is attributed to the Greeks of the classical epoch may be claimed by the Albanians. An English writer states that "the modern Greek, with the exception perhaps of the inhabitants of the Aegean and other Greek islands, has in his veins but a negligible quantity of the blood which made the name of Greece immortal".\*

From about 1200 to 167 B.C. the northern and central Albania of to-day were parts of the Kingdom of Illyria (Albanian: "liria" = freedom), which had as capital Shkodra or Scutari as it is known to-day. The Illyrian tribes seem to have lived in a state of continuous warfare with their neighborhood nations and each other, and the early history of the Macedonian Kings is one constant struggle against them.

\* "Albania, The Rise of the Kingdom"; pp.6-7; by J.S.Swire

In about 600 B.C. took place the great barbaric invasion of the Celts. But their effect upon the Balkan Peninsula was transitory and negligent.

Actually the Illyrian Kingdom rose to its peak of its power early in about the fourth century, under the rule of Bardhyllus whose Kingdom at one time extended from Trieste (Albanian for market-place) to the Gulf of Arta. Bardhyllus almost succeeded in destroying the rising Kingdom of Macedonia; but the Illyrians were eventually defeated, and their territory as far as Lake Ochrida, one of the most beautiful lakes of the country, annexed by the Great Philip in 358 B.C.

King Kleitos, son of Bardhyllus was induced to follow his kinsman Alexander the Great---son of Philip II of Macedon---in his expedition against the Persian Empire, in which the Illyrian troops played a prominent part. But with the death of Alexander Illyria was restored her liberty for which she had so longed to have. But with the ensuing Illyrian Wars (229 and 219 B.C.) the outcome was in favor of the Romans, who annexed certain parts of the country. Illyria however remained a powerful country till 180 B.C. when the Dalmatians proclaimed themselves independent, and established a Republic which survived until finally subjugated by the Romans in 9 A.D. after many years of fierce fighting.

The Romans again attacked the reduced Illyria in 168 B.C. and three years later her King, Gentius, was defeated at Skutari (Albanian town) and brought to Rome. From then Illyria became a Roman dependency divided between the three provinces of Dalmatia, Macedonia, and Epirus. She became Rome's foremost recruiting area and her sons doubtless assisted to hold the Britons in subjection. And yet Roman supremacy in Albania was never firmly established. Although there are traces of Roman occupation thru-out the country, the Roman influence upon the history and character of the Albanians was slight, though upon the language considerable.



It was during this Roman occupation that Christianity was introduced into Albania by St. Paul; and he is quoted to have said: "I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ".

There evolved as result of this period of invasions several independent Albanian principalities ruled by foreign Princes with the **consent** of the people. While the Crusaders (fourth Crusade) hoped to go to the Holy Land, they thought it advisable to attack Constantinople, prior to proceeding to the Holy Land. The city was captured primarily due to the skill of the Venetian forces which participated in the expedition, and Venice received accordingly as part of her spoils the Eastern Shores of the Adriatic. But a Prince of the overthrown rulers of Byzantium, Michael Comnenus, gathered around him the Albanian nobility, drove the Venetians from southern Albania etc. and set up an independent principality with Janina as its capital.

So it was during this period that the Albanians of the South who had hitherto adhered to the Patriarchate of Rome, **seceded** therefrom under Byzantine influence to the Orthodox Church, while the Catholics of the North remained **faithful** to Rome. In 1222 Theodore Comnenus had conquered Thessaly and overrun Macedonia, which he had ruled until defeated by the Bulgarians in 1230; but thru marriage the Despotat under Comnenus family continued until 1318, and thereafter by Orsini until 1358.

About the middle of the 14th century the Despotat was overrun by Albanians (Illyrians and Ghegs) under Jin Bua Spata and Peter Liosha. These Albanians took Janina and Arta, displacing Tosks, who then moved south and established settlements in Greece, which have never been absorbed. Finlay estimated in 1851 that of a total population of Greece of one million, 200,000 of them were Albanians; and in 1879 it was estimated that 58,858 spoke Albanian only. A Greek monthly magazine,

Parnassos, stated that: "The majority of our soldiers speak to one another in the Albanian language.... a very deplorable habit... it is expedient that this habit be destroyed by all necessary and vigorous means". Prince Lichnowsky wrote: "the so-called Greek national dress itself is of Albanian origin".

Upon the collapse of Stefan "Dushan's" ephemeral Empire, the Governor of the Serb principality of Zeta (now Yougoslavia), which included the Hertzegovina, Montenegro, and Northern Albania, assumed the title of Balsha I, and formed an independent Albanian State (1366-1422) with Skutari as its capital. Balsha was, it is alleged, a Norman knight who had entered the service of Stefan "Dushan".

The Dukagjin family ruled in the northern Albania (extreme north), while the northern part of the "Kingdom of Albania", including Durazzo and Kruja ruled the Topia, and thereafter by the Castriota, a family which made realistic history for Albania.

The power of the Balshas was short-lived, and towards the end of the 14th century the Venetians once more obtained possessions in Albania, including Durazzo, Skutari and Antivari as the price of a defensive alliance against a fresh and formidable foe from the east. Fortunately, the Turkish armies were for the next thirty years too fully occupied by internal strife. One by one the Albanian feudal chieftains, including John Castriota of Kruja, were forced to submission. The latter was allowed to retain his independence under Turkish suzerainty, but as proof<sup>d</sup> of his good faith, so the story goes, was compelled to give as hostages his four sons, the youngest of whom was destined to win fame thru-out Europe and to be immortalized as the national hero of his country.

The four young sons, as hostages, were sent to the Turkish capital to be trained for the Ottoman service. George, the youngest, born in 1403,

by his great ability and strength, soon won the Sultan's favor; he was promoted to high military rank and was entrusted with the administration of a sanjak. He became a nominal Mussulman of the Mohammedan faith, and so distinguished himself by his valour and strategy that he was named Iskender Bey (Albanian: Skenderbeg= Prince Alexander) in complimentary reference to Alexander the Great.

Upon the death of John Castriota, one of his four sons should have succeeded him. But Skenderbeg's eldest brothers had been disposed off by poison; and Skenderbeg himself was considered by the Sultan to be sufficiently favoured, more useful and less dangerous in the Turkish service. Accordingly, a Turkish governor, Sabel Pasha, was installed at Kruja. Skenderbeg concealed his indignation, but resolved to turn or return to his home and religion at the first opportunity. Of course he knew nothing of his predecessors, since he had been so young, but one of his recruits (an Elder) entrusted him in confidence, and told him the whole history of his family, and whom he believed. With such information on hand, his patience was rewarded in 1443 when the victorious John Hunyadi at the head of a combined army of Hungarians and Serbs routed at Nish the Turkish army in which Skenderbeg held a command. During its flight Skenderbeg extorted from the Sultan's secretary an imperial order instructing Sabel Pasha to surrender to him the fortress and Governorship of Kruja. He subsequently arrived at **Kruja** in seven days with a handful of Albanians (loyal to him), and the fortress was surrendered to him, unsuspectingly. Thus the red flag bearing black double-headed-eagle---the emblem of Skenderbeg---was hoisted above its battlements.

Skenderbeg abjured the Moslem faith and embraced Roman Catholicism. On March 1st, 1444, he was proclaimed "Chief of the League of the Albanian

people" among many delegates from various outstanding nations of the world; and the whole of Albania, including the greater part of Epirus, united under his leadership against the common aggressor.

The enraged Sultan staged a series of ruthless attacking campaigns against Skenderbeg, thirteen of them, which lasted with brief interludes until his death in the last campaign. It was during his reign that Albania became a prominent country territorially, and politically; but with the death of Skenderbeg in the last campaign terminated everything for nearly the next 450 years, and Albania, what progress she had made previously on literature, and politically was torn asunder by the Turkish Empire.

"History repeats itself"---"happy is the nation without a history"--such ideas existed in the middle of the eighteenth century or thereabouts. I wish that Albania had complied with the latter, than all this constant warfare for self nationalism would have been forgotten by now. Such was the situation that Albania had to overcome for at least 450 years.

Albania was the last of the Balkan countries to fall under the domination of the Ottoman Empire, and the last to obtain independence. And the Albanian nation is still laboring under the pernicious effects of the Turkish conquests.

Ethically and racially the Albanians have been affected in no way by their submission to the Ottoman rule, because the despised Turks had been utterly incapable of exercising any kind of influence on their national traditions. Yet the Turks did exercise an ominous influence in other directions.

In the first place, a large number of the Albanians, who were unwilling to reconcile themselves to the conditions created by the imposition of a hated rule, chose to bid farewell to their native country and migrate into other lands, especially, and Greece. The worst of it is that they represented the "élite" of the nation. In the second place,

the Turkish conquest brought about a new division among the Albanians. Just as in every country in their **possession**, the Turks employed pressure in order to procure the conversion of the Albanians to the Moslem faith. Thus one-half of the population was converted to Mohammedanism against their will. But in so doing, the Albanians were actuated by practical considerations rather than by any religious or moral motives. The fact is that they resolved to sacrifice their religion at the altar of liberty. In many instances the conversion was only outwardly and a mere travesty. Yet, by **their** action they came to be treated as allies of the Turks and rose to prominent posts in all the branches of the Turkish government. Thirdly, the Turkish occupation isolated Albania entirely from the outside of the world, and kept her out of touch with the higher civilization, in-as-much as the Turkish control had been exerted on the sea coast. Consequently, the Albanians fell again into a stupor, and political languor, and stagnation which enfeebled still **more** their position as a nationality. Lastly as a ~~their~~ result of their fretting and continuous convulsions against the Sultan, the Albanians became bellicose, more nervous and more restless than ever. The obvious necessity of bearing arms at all times and places against the lurking enemy, made them a nation-wide-in-arms and gave **them** a fierce appearance. This latter feature has been so construed as to give birth to the imaginary tales of the "Albanian Brigands" who, in reality never existed.

When the Albanian League was organized toward getting the independence, it was readily suppressed by the Turks, but the damage was all ready done to the Turks, because with its rise, national societies rose with the common aim to stimulate the national sentiment and to strengthen the bonds of unity among the Albanians by the destruction of the religious barriers which the Turkish government had erected in order to keep the Albanians disunited.

There were three other obstacles to be overcome, besides the religious question: Firstly, the almost complete lack of the Albanian literature rendered the spread of education among the Albanians in their native language almost impossible. The oldest book was published in the 15th century, and after it, practically no serviceable books made their appearance; secondly, even if there were any Albanian books, they were of no available use, since the Turkish government had definitely barred the Albanian language from the few schools that it existed, and the only language to be used was Turkish. Thirdly, the Albanian language was interdicted by a decree of the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, who threatened with excommunication and eternal damnation any orthodox<sup>who</sup> would use the "accursed Albanian tongue either in schools or in the churches".

After some constant disturbances, Albania was yielded a slight leeway toward the use of her language, and as a result, during the years of 1878-1880, native schools sprang up instantly, books, newspapers, periodicals etc. But shortly after, the Turkish Government was noticing the excellent result and progress such leeway did, and having been frightened by the success of popular education in the Albanian language, shut them down again, and the publications were driven off to find refuge in foreign lands. Still they were smuggled in indirectly, for the seed was already planted, and once it grows, the product has to be reaped out.

All these societies with their publications paved the way for the Albanians to seek autonomy. The struggle for regeneration was in full swing, but the fear of the future Albania was always haunting in the minds of the patriots, nevertheless. Altho Albania was far behind in fulfilling the requirements for self-independence its people were constantly trying to obtain it, and if they were unable to govern themselves, they would call for a ruler from some foreign land as they

did in 1913-14. They **claimed** that it would take some time in order to recruit and organize the forces of the nation to its full capacity, but nations can not be built over-night.

With the evolution of events which go to make history, Albania was being rounded into a more complete, and unifying country, and the zeal for self-independence was flourishing more and more. Then all of a sudden rose a genius, an iron man, who seemed to possess the qualities and consciousness, spirited will, who undertook to work this miracle. He was none other than Ismail Kemal Bey of Avlona ( a sea-port), a leader of wide fame and reputation, the implecable enemy of the Turks. At the outbreak of these events, he was in Constantinople, where he was offered a seat in the Turkish Government for the Turkish cause. He declined the offer, and hurriedly left the Turkish capital, caused a meeting of prominent Albanians to be held at Bucharest, and after critical discussion on the future of Albania, proceeded on his way to Albania with a small suite. At Trieste, the party embarked on an Austrian steamer which sailed away to Durazzo.

On Nov. 26, 1912, the party arrived at Valona (Avlona) which found immensely crowded with refugees from all the invaded Albanian territories. Immediately circular telegraphic messages were sent to all the invaded areas to send delegates to Valona to take part in the solemn act which would resuscitate the old Kingdom of Skenderbeg. On November 28, 1912, the most memorable historic day of Modern Albania, the national flag, the black double-headed eagle of Skenderbeg, was hoisted among the tearful acclamation of a population which was too well aware that it was passing the most serious crisis in the history of a nation. Thereupon a provisional government was formed under the Presidency of Ismail Kemal Bey, as well as a provisional national assembly. An official notification of this event was transmitted to the Powers of Europe. Yet the turn of events was not yet settled, for

before he had proceeded to the proclamation of independence, he had first sounded the governments of the two great powers--Austria, and Italy---that were concerned in the fate of Albania. Now it was the turn of these powers to take their stand in the question. By virtue of certain agreements about 1900, these two powers engaged themselves to guarantee the integrity of Albania, in case of the Turkish Empire being dismembered. But these two powers wanted to get control of the Adriatic, and neither was willing to let the other get control of it---hence the permit for the creation of another state to satisfy both; furthermore Austria was jealous to see Serbia spread out, and get an outlet to the Adriatic sea. Instead Austria would rather have seen a new independent nation. Austria and Germany, her co-partner, had yet to satisfy themselves, and rectify the "Mittel Europa" dream. In fact, the danger of a general European conflagration loomed ominous on the horizon. Sir Edward Grey said once that the Albanian question almost brought that dreadful European War.\* Even after the reluctant recognition of the independence and the creation of the Albanian principality, the new State was looked upon with holy horror as the illegitimate child of Austrian diplomacy, with Italy figuring as the mid-wife. Thus, the long over-sought dreams to come true came, and from 1912, to the present time the country has been struggling to modernize itself from all angles and modes that are requisites prior to the making of a nation. All nations have gone thru the process of becoming unified, but the length of time that it took this small country of about 1,500,000 now, is unsurpassable. The long drawn out sufferings have vanished, the spirit of nationalism reigns, and her efforts thru the ages are not in vain.

\* American Year Book, 1913, page 102



## Language

The Albanian language is remarkable as the only surviving representative of the so-called Thraco-Illyrian group, which formed the primitive speech of the peninsula. The ancient Illyrian languages fall into two groups, the northern, closely related or connected with the Venetic, and the southern, perhaps allied to Messapian, and now probably represented by Albanian. Its analysis presents, however great difficulties, as, owing to the absence of early literary monuments, no certainty can be arrived at with regard to its earlier forms and later developments. The presence of a large number of <sup>foreign</sup> words makes it difficult to decide whether the mutilated and curtailed forms, now in use, represent adopted words or belong to the original vocabulary. Its groundwork, as far as it can be ascertained, and the grammar are distinctly Indo-European.

In the course of development, the language has been materially impregnated with numerous foreign words due primarily to the invasions of the Turks, Slavs, Greeks, and Romans in the earlier centuries. Yet it is a well known fact that the Illyrian language exerted some influence on the rest of the languages of the Balkans.

Some of the striking features of the Albanian language are its rational explanation of the meaning of the names of the Ancient Greek Gods, as well as of the rest of the mythological creations. The opinion is further confirmed that the Greek mythology words have been borrowed, in their entirety from the Illyrian-Pelasgians. For example, the word Zeus survives as "Zot" in the Albanian language standing for God. Athena (the Latin Minerva), the goddess of wisdom, would most likely owe its origin to the Albanian "E thena" which simply means "speech". Thetis, the goddess of waters and seas, would seem to be but the Albanian "Det" which means "sea". Still further, the common mythological name

"Ulysses," whether in its Latin or the Greek form "Odysseus," means "traveler" in the Albanian language, according as the word "udhe", which stands for both "route" and "travel".

Entire phrases and sections may be taken from the Homeric poems to be of typical Albanian origin, and expressions.\* in addition we must not forget the fact that Zeus was a Pelasgian god, his original place of worship being Dodona.

In 1827 the whole of the New Testament had been published in modern Greek and Tosk Albanian under the auspices of the Bible Society. An Albanian dictionary appeared dated 1866. Between 1860 and 1870 Constantine Christophorides, an Albanian patriot, translated large parts of the Bible, and a volume containing the four Gospels and the Acts, together with an alphabet to enable the illiterate to read it. It was published in Latin characters, with minor alterations to convey certain sounds necessary to the pronunciation of the Albanian language. In 1877 an Albanian Committee was appointed at Constantinople for the purpose of rehabilitating the Albanian language and building up an Albanian literature. This Committee adopted the Latin characters in lieu of the Arabic and Greek characters.

Now, the Albanian language uses purely Latin characters, and with that has made outstanding progress on literature; and once <sup>more</sup> the forgotten Albanian literature is revived.

\* "Albania Past and Present" by C.A. Chekrezi; pp.5-7

## Geographical Features

Albania lies geographically north of Greece, bounded on the east and north by Yugoslavia, and west by the Adriatic sea--across from which faces Italy.

Albania is however more comprehensive in its ethnographical than in its geographical meaning. The "Akropolis" a Greek magazine, stated the following ethnographical zones of Albania:

" 1. Southern Albania from the Greek boundary (as it stood before the Balkan War of 1912) to the River Shkumbi.

2. Central Albania , from Shkumbi to the River Mati.

3. Northern Albania, from Mati River to the frontier of Montenegro before 1912.

4. Northeastern Albania, which included the Novi-Bazar, Pristina, etc.

5. Macedonian Albania from the lake of Ochrida and Prespa to Prilep and Monastir.

In addition to these one must add the important Albanian colonies in Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

But when the Conference of Ambassadors met, Albania was minimized so greatly that almost one-half of the territory had to be abandoned to Greece and Yugoslavia. Thus the new state (1912) was left a miserable wreck, and which became the "toy" of circumstances. At the present time Albania barely reaches the 12,000 square mile mark, as compared to many times that mileage in the historical times.

Physically, by nature, Albania is divided into three regions:

1. The north region is very mountainous, with occasional lowlands and few fertile valleys. Its mountains form a part of the Dinaric Alpine of Dalmatia and Bosnia. It is richly covered with "virgin" forests of Albania . The central region includes two large and fertile

plains of Kavaja and Muzakia. The eternally snow covered mountain of Tomori stands in the middle, "like a gigantic-marble-white statue" clearly visible to those who navigate the sea of Adriatic. Tomoritza, its summit, reaches an altitude of 7500 feet or more. 3. The southern region is likewise more or less mountainous. It is here where beauty is most prevalent---beautiful rivers, fertile plains and valleys.

The climate of Albania can easily be apprehended in accordance to its physical features. The influence of the Mediterranean Sea diminishes eastward and northwestward from the Adriatic coast and gives place to conditions of a more continental type. The rate and manner in which the transition takes place depend upon: 1. The existence of a permanent trough of relatively low barometric pressure along the line of the Adriatic, and 2. The relief of the land. The effect of the former is to strengthen the westerly component of the winds along the southern part of the coast, making air currents of moderate and high humidity advance inland with greater persistence than farther north. The extent of the penetration of the moist temperate current from the sea depends upon the height and continuity of the mountain barrier. The warm moist south and southwest wind along the coast is often known as the Scirocco, but is merely the characteristic wind of the east side of the Adriatic depression. The off-shore wind, most frequent in the north, is a movement of air from the interior highlands, and is dry and very cold in winter. This wind is called Bara.\*

On the coast the summer tends to be oppressively warm and the winter cold, while the great difference between the heat of the day and the cold of the night is often trying. The contrasts are most pronounced in southern Albania, the part whence I came. At Valona, the mean monthly temperature in January is 48°F (9°C) rising to 77°F (25°C) in July. The Bara greatly increases the difficulty of navigation along the Albanian coast. The period of rainy days diminishes

progressively from north to south, and rain can be counted from October to March. In the highlands the winter is said to last from five to six months, and snow covers all the higher mountains and mountain ranges till March or April.\*

Albania is traversed in all directions by a system of splendid rivers such as Bojana, Drin, Black and White Shkumbi, Semain or Deval, the silvery-white Viosa, and the southern Drin. These rivers are beautiful and picturesque and impressing not only to the tourists but to the Albanians themselves who pride them with the greatest of respect. Albania is equally well supplied with beautiful lakes, and some of which are the most beautiful in Europe.

- \* Peace Handbooks--Volume III, the Balkan States, Part I, 1920, Number 17, pp. 5-7; by Great Britain
- Foreign Office--Historical section.

## Economic Albania

Albania is primarily an agricultural country, as the physical features portray. But her isolation from the outside world under the long Turkish regime, her unsettled conditions, arising from the constant strain of wars, the notorious indifference of the Turkish Government in such matters, and most of all, the complete lack of means of communication, are responsible for the backward and primitive state of agriculture.

The soil is very fertile and productive especially in the region of Kavaja and Muzakia. It is estimated that the produce derived from these two plains will supply not only the entire Albanian population, but also will furnish a surplus for exports.

Crops and stock raising are abundant and the chief ones comprise such as vegetables, cereals, fruits, hemp, flax, cotton, tobacco, and timber; and in live stock why the same stock is raised there as here. In other words people there are so interdependent on such produce, that were it not prevalent the people would perish in famines.

The basis of land-ownership is still the freehold type, and the class of independent yeoman is very numerous. Most of the lands belong to the Beys and Pashas (aristocratic land-owning class). Thus the land on the other hand is leased (land tenure system) to the peasantry, in the form of perpetual leases. Usually the lessee is required to turn over to the land-lord one-third of the annual produce, and one-tenth more in addition to take care of the taxes. The result has been every unsuccessful, for the peasants are only impoverished and the lords merely derive the benefits of enriching themselves to extremes.

There are but few manufacturing industries in Albania, and those are: flour and saw mills, soap factory few tanneries, wool and

shoe factories, and timber factories.

There is however an abundance of coal and iron, some steel, copper, oil (petroleum) and natural gas---but lack of means (efficient means and capital) has hampered their development. Asphalt is extensively <sup>used</sup> as an inferior fuel to replace the charcoal, which is too costly. French and Germans have also discovered gold and silver, lead, antimony, lead, cinnabar, chromium, lignite and quicksilver. Thus then the future of Albania lies in her undevelopped mineral and forest resources.

Communication is still somewhat primitive in the mountainous regions, but with the rise of the Kingdom, since 1927, much progress is being made to introduce air-craft, automobiles (imported from America and Italy), and busses, and perhaps a couple of trains connecting the most important points of Albania with the capital, Tirana.

One can go, one by one and enumerate many things which Albania lacks toward a self sustaining nation, but such things will come with time. So let us now take a different aspect of Albania for which this paper is to be written---that is the Evolution of Public Health in Albania.

## The Evolution of Modern Public Health in Albania

It would be obviously simple to derive some idea of the Health conditions in Albania without any statistical data to back out any fundamental statements. Vital statistics aren't merely a collection of facts analyzed rather ambiguously, but a collection of facts analyzed thoroughly, and backed with sound reasoning, charts, tables, and various rates, etc.

So to assume the initiative, I wish to emphasize and back to the best of my ability, and with the assistance of the various annual reports, the real public health aspect as it has been for the years 1927-1932. Most of the statistical data prior to these years mentioned are not correlated together so as to make any sense.

The 1930 census records the population of Albania at 1,003,097, with a density of 36 person per square kilometer, in contrast to that of Belgium which has 270 persons per square kilometer. The rest of the Balkan countries align themselves in the following order in regard to the density of population. Bulgaria has 58 persons per square kilometer; Greece, 49, Yugoslavia 48.

The diverse variable factors which enter into compilation, and which such as sex, age, and occupation, were not taken into consideration in order to make a thorough study. However, the country is still young yet, and has not had enough time to recover from the blighted past which she had to undergo. I hope that with the steady progress that she is making now, that too, will be supplied adequately.

The births from 1927 to 1932 show an appreciable increase. From 2,776 births in 1927 it jumped to 25,062 in 1932. It is almost double.



it surely is significant, for that last figure really describes the characteristic home life in Albania. Nothing is more important in Albania, than a good sized family. Yet for a country agriculturally inclined, it shows a typical picture of the birth problem. The rates of 12.7 per 1000 in 1927, to 25.0 in 1932 induces one into a few fallacies of statistical processes. It is either that the birth registration records were not collected carefully, or the number of the population is highly exaggerated. The number of births is therefore low, and in the course of time these errors will be weeded out.

To verify the above birth statistics, let us assume another aspect of these derivatives. Since Albania is divided into ten prefectorial provinces, why we have the following birth rates for the five year period: The province of Scutari has a rate of 22.0 per 1000 births; Korcha, 18.5; Argyrotastry ;8.0; Berati, 20.0; Durazzo 19.2; Avlona 15.4; Kosova 14.8; Elbasan, 14.1; Dibra 12.0; and Tirana 9.0. Therefore the average number of births per 1000 is 17.0.

The death statistics on the other hand are somewhat appalling, and yet if statistics do not lie, then it would have to be taken for granted. But I can't conceive the causes of so many deaths for such a small population since facilities for public health improvement have been investigated. Deaths from 1927 to 1932 in absolute figures range from 10103 in 1927 to 17870 in 1932. The average number of deaths being 13.7 per 1000. It would be convenient information if we really knew the causes of deaths, altho there is no doubt that many deaths are due to disease transmitting insect vectors.

The infant mortality under one year: In 1930 there were 3240 deaths; in 1931, 2831; in 1932, 3156. So for every 1000 births, the rates are 140.0 per 1000 in 1930; 114.0 in 1931; and 126.0 in 1932. Hence there is an appreciable decrease for those three years, thanks to the efforts of voluntary health agencies. These figures are not as high when we compare them with those of the adjoining nations. Roumania, for instance, had 196.0 per 1000; Bulgaria 137.0; while Belgium the country with the highest density in regard to population per kilometer, had only 93.0, and Holland 56.0 per 1000 births.

#### The Organization of the Ministry of Health

The purpose of this organization is of four fold nature: To provide hospitals in all the provinces; to provide dispensaries; ambulance service, and medical care. The hospitals and province <sup>clinics</sup> ~~dispensaries~~ to be located centrally so as to be within reach to the towns people and villagers as well.

Altho the hospital facilities are rather meagre, they do however, provide adequate care irregardless of the types of diseases.

One of the most outstanding hospitals erected within the last five years, is the one erected at the capital of Albania. It is called ~~Zog~~ **Zog I**, honoring the King of Albania, altho he really was the **innovator** of the idea, and helps support it with funds. With the edification of this hospital on one of the most beautiful and scenic parts of Albania, the public health condition, in the capital and nearby towns and villages, has been elevated on par with those of the near-by capitals of the Balkan **countries**.

In normal health conditions, it has 200 beds, with 100 more beds in store in case of emergency. It's divided into eight departments: Surgery,

Gynecology and maternity, oto-laryngology, Internal medicine ( two sub-departments, one for men, and one for women), Venereal diseases, Roentgenology, and bacteriological laboratory for special research work, and preparation of vaccines, and antiserums.

Dermatology and ophthalmology as two subdepartments occupy a great deal of space; and much good work is being performed.

Zog I hospital has two operating rooms with all the modern equipments necessary, and the medical staff performing all the surgical operations etc. are graduates of ~~from~~ German medical schools.

Physician's Association which was started in 1932 has laid certain principles to be observed. The physicians should spend two weeks every month in all the adjoining cities remedying various defects as found in school children. So School health problems seem to be of primary importance here. The remaining two weeks are spent in treatment of the general public wherever there may be a demand; and being especially on the lookout for any infectious and communicable diseases. In case there are any syphilitic cases encountered by chance, such individuals are directed to go a hospital for immediate treatment , and in case there is any resistance displayed by one infected with venereal disease, the medical men are authorized by law to report the case, and utilize police officers for the deliverance of such cases to a proper hospital, so as not to endanger the rest of the people of a community. Venereal diseases are looked down by the majority of people in Albania; and such an infected individual is rendered no sympathy of any sort. Veneral diseases are uncommon in Albania anyway, perhaps it may be due to so much malaria in the country--- for malaria organisms are used a great deal in this country for the treatment of Syphilis in regard to the raising of the temperature, or the thermal death point of Spirochaetes of Syphilis. It is asserted that in countries where there is a great deal of malaria, Syphilis is not a

serious problem.

Each province is assigned a Public Health Officer with several sanitary assistants whose duty is to scour the villages and towns for problems which endanger the public health of a township. These sanitary assistants pay several visits per week to all the food establishments, dairy industries, sewage disposal plants, water supply wells and springs, and swamps where mosquitos breed luxuriantly. Since the Rockefeller Foundation has loaned a hand in bettering the health conditions in Albania in regard to Malaria and other protozoan diseases much progress has been accomplished

A children's health service is available in the capital and other provinces of Albania whose primary duty is to treat free of charge those children whose parents are unable to provide medical treatment and food. This Health Service takes these children, treats them for any maladjustments, and malnutrition diseases, until they have been pronounced as "cured". And then they are sent back to their respective homes with the general understanding that their health is maintained. Many children are taken care of in this manner, and those children whose parents can afford to give treatment to their children are charged but a minimum sum of money. These children, for some reason or other, that are not able to be breast-fed by their mothers, are taken care of by the Children's Health Service, and provided the proper nutrition taking in regard the ages of the children, free of charge, till better care can be afforded by their mothers, and fathers.

All the children brought to that clinic are first analyzed bacteriologically thoroughly; are given a thorough examination with X-ray facilities; are to undergo a blood analysis, etc. Those children with dermatological disease, such as hereditary syphilis, if they are unable to be taken care of by the clinic, they are directed to the Province hospital for further treatment.

For every child entered in the children's clinic, there are thorough records kept; and every month the statistics are compiled and announced in the monthly reports of the Ministry of Health.

The most common diseases of children encountered by the clinics and hospitals are of the following character: Malaria, atrophy which may be due to malnutrition, eczema, ophthalmic problems and others.

The personell of the Children's Health Service consists of a physician, schbol directors(of the school of nurses), two nurses for the preparation of the milk and other foods, one nurse for the registration of the children cases, and one assistant nurse to the doctor. The same character predominates in all the clinics of the ten provinces of Albania.

At the present time a Sanatarium is being built to accomadate several hundred children, especially those that are infected with all types of malarial diseases. A project is pending now for the edification of a Tuberculosis Sanatarium, and I am sure that it will built before the year is over.

## The Activities of the Health Institutes--1927-'32

There is no doubt that the general trend of the public health conditions in Albania are on the incline, more so than it was ever dreamed of, but the country is still young yet; and of course too much can't be anticipated. Yet, however, in proportion to what had been done before those five years, from 1927-1932, the work in restoring Albania toward a healthy mindedness is unusually great--much beyond the expectations of many laymen. There is plenty in store yet, with a great deal of initiative in reserve. But the general opinion is that Albania will soon be aligned on the same scale with those of the other European countries.

Below I shall illustrate <sup>(table)</sup> diagrammatically in figures, just how the trend toward better health stands,

Year:	<u>1927</u>	<u>1928</u>	<u>1929</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1931</u>	<u>1932</u>
Cases	70309	57060	65725	67279	66431	81127
discharged:						

From the above table one can deduct that the cases discharged after treatment is on the increase. For example in 1932, there is a 25% increase. This is due to better sanitation facilities which have been introduced from year to year. And with the Rockefeller Fondation doing a great deal of work thru out the country on ridding the country from Malaria; and with the increase of the budget by the government for sanitation work --one can surely become convinced that a healthy attitude has gripped the general population of Albania. I am surely glad to conceive such an attitude, and hope that it shall be continued.

The more common endemic diseases in Albania such as Malaria, Syphilis, Tuberculosis, and other diseases are illustrated by the following figures:

The increase in Malaria from 1931 to 1932 is 2.5%, which undoubtedly can be attributed to a series of "flu" epidemics that took place in 1932, and atmospheric conditions. The number of cases treated successfully, has increased, however, so it may not be such a severe problem in the years to come. The increase is 9 percent more than in other diseases.

The syphilitic cases however, those treated successfully, are on the decline, with a percentage of 5 percent over other diseases. While on the other hand tuberculosis is getting to be somewhat of a problem, with an increase of 7 percent. This is due most likely to the lack of proper equipments, and X-ray facilities.

Another public health problem that should be met with much success in the future, is the feeble-mindedness. It is to be deemed with fear, and I hope that feeble-mindedness doesn't become a factor in the public health activities of Albania.

The following tables portray the following diseases encountered in ~~six~~ of the provinces of Albania. The statistic for ~~the~~ ~~these~~ provinces are lacking, and I am unable to find any material.

Period of 1927-32

The Province of Scutari

Year	Measles	Typhoid Fever	Diphtheria	Typhus Fever
1927	19	13	-----	-----
1928	1	2	-----	-----
1929	25	8	-----	-----
1930	118	33	5	-----
1931	35	24	2	-----
1932	459	12	3	9

The Province of Berati

Year	Measles	Typhoid and Paratyphoid	Diphtheria	Scarlet Fever
1927	160	21	---	---
1928	37	2	---	---
1929	42	1	2	---
1930	9	15	---	1
1931	154	18	1	1
1932	1051	31	---	20

## The Province of Korça

Year	Measles	Typhoid Fever	Paratyphoid Fever	Diphtheria	Typhus
1927	46	----	20	---	-----
1928	15	7	----	20	-----
1929	----	----	13	20	-----
1930	4	12	5	10	-----
1931	2	15	----	9	9
1932	463	4	9	1	-----

## The Province of Argynokastro

Year	Measles	Typhoid and Paratyphoid	Diphtheria	Scarlet F.	Deaths
1927	22	4	3	33	3
1928	55	---	---	190	7
1929	113	---	---	10	---
1930	6	15	13	---	2
1931	---	16	3	---	2
1932	462	4	2	39	8

## The Province of Vlona

Year	Measles	Typhoid and Paratyphoid	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria
1927	32	20	---	---
1928	20	---	---	---
1929	---	10	---	---
1930	---	---	---	---
1931	---	3	---	---
1932	114	3	---	---

## The Province of Elbasan

Year	Measles	Typhoid and Paratyphoid	Diphtheria	Scarlet Fever
1927	230	1	---	---
1928	4	---	---	---
1929	---	---	---	2
1930	---	1	---	---
1931	4	4	1	---
1932	46	---	---	---

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## "War Against Malaria"

### The Creation of the Antimalaria Section

Malaria is the scourge of Albania; and it has been so for many years. It is one of the most outstanding public health problems, purely because of the presence of swamps, and lakes, and other breeding places where the *Anapholes* mosquito find favorable breeding grounds for propagation. The Ministry of Health has done much to control Malaria for the past several years only to be met with discouraging results, because of the shortage of money allowed by the Government to combat the mosquito breeding places thru-out Albania. Not much success was made available till that ingenious Rockefeller Fondation loaned a hand in the affair of this little Balkan Kingdom, one of the smallest kingdoms in the world.

To combat malaria, it is a costly proposition. And when a country as poor as Albania could do but very little to offset this devastating disease of humanity. Therefore the Ministry of Health conceived the need for special assistance, and soon sought the help of the Rockefeller Fondation.

Soon, the Rockefeller Fondation sent Dr. L. W. Hackett, on August 1926, to make a survey of the infesting areas by *Anapholes*, once the scourge of the World. With the intense interest of Lady Camarvon, and the American Minister of Foreign Affairs, Charles C. Hart, the Rockefeller Fondation authorized Dr. Hackett to take matters in his own, and promote the building of various antimalaria stations thru-out Albania for the primary purpose of combatting Malaria. The proposition as offered by the Rockefeller Fondation was approved by the Albanian Ministry of Health, and the Government, that the expenses involved in the "War against Malaria" be shared equally.

Two malaria stations were ready for work in January, 1929; and in the following two years two more stations were added, but before the year

1932 terminated, two more additional stations arose. So now there are malarial stations in Tirana (the capital of Albania), Durazzo, Scutari, Berat, Avlona, and Korcha. There is the understanding, however, that more stations should be built as the demand arises, and every station should be equipped with all the necessary means for combatting Malaria.

### Methods Used in Combatting Malaria

All the three types of Malaria fevers are encountered in Albania, altho the Tertian Malaria fever and Quartan Malaria fever seem to predominate along the more temperate regions.

Tertian malaria fever is rarely fatal, and is readily amenable to quinine. The time required for asexual development of the Tertian parasite is 48 hours. Paroxysms appear on alternate days, or the first attack is followed by the recurrent attack on the third day---hence Tertian fever.

The Quartan Malaria fever parasite completes its asexual production in 72 hours, and the attack taking place at intervals of three days.

The Estivo-autumnal Malaria fever parasite on the other hand, completes its propagation in 48 hours, altho there is a belief that it reproduces every 24 hours.

It is asserted that many species of the Anapholes are almost wholly nocturnal in their habitats; rarely biting by day. Thus the liability of contracting malaria is more apparent during the night hours. The proximity of a malarial patient is never a source of danger unless Anapholes mosquitoes occur in the immediate environment; and conversely the Anaphole mosquito is not to be feared, unless there are persons bearing the malarial parasites and are exposed, because the Anapholes is specific for malarial infected individuals.

The methods as devised by the Rockefeller Foundation in combatting malaria, and diminishing the malarial infestations, are the following:

The administration of quinine, in proper proportions in regard to the ages of the infected individuals, is one of the mprimary methods, altho drainage of swamps, and various breeding places is carried on on a large scale. The quinine is administered in 10 ~~grains~~ of quinine sulfate, thru the mouth three times a day, for a period of at least three or four days. The dosage is followed by treatment consisting of 10 grains taken every night before retiring, for a period of eight weeks. For infant patients with acute symptoms lacking, only eight weeks treatment, without the preliminary dosage, is necessary.

The more accurate method used for children especially and adults in the administration of quinine is as follow:

<u>For children:</u>	<u>Dose of Quinine in grains</u>
less than 1 year	0.5
1 year	1.0
2 years	2.0
3 and 4 years	3.0
5,6 and 7 years	4.0
8,9 and 10 years	6.0
11,12,13 and 14 years	8.0
15 years and over	10.0

A new Quinoline synthetic derivative, called Plasmochin , invented by some German experts on malaria, is being tested for its remedying effects in Albania, but the actual results have not as yet been checked.

The second method used is in attacking the larval stage in the breeding pools, swamps etc. This brings about the call for engineers, because it consists of draining, filling and altering the course of streams and lakes, so that they could become unsuitable as breeding places. The engineering projects are too expensive however, and as a joint assitance various poisons are being utilized to kill the mosquito larvae. Some of the most common poisons used are oils or larvicides, paraform, and "Paris Green"(this being the most extensively used). The "Paris Green" is mixed with 99% dust and is strewn over the body of the waters. The low concentration is born in mind so as not to render the water unsuitable for

consumption by man and animals. This method of "Paris Green" is the cheapest, and yet the most satisfactory means for general malaria control. The use of "top minnows" which feed on larvae alone, as well as other crustacean life, has not been utilized as yet because of the poor transportation facilities of the country with other nations, which up-to-date are still in the embryonic state.

The third method, that is, the use of mosquito nettings, mosquito-proof housing, screening etc. is practiced extensively in order to prevent contact of the Anapholes with infected persons.

It is evident that much good work is being made possible with the coming of the Rockefeller Foundation, and I am sure that the Albanian people are most grateful to that institute, and to the American people who have shown such a willing interest in the public health activities of this little country. I am optimistic, however, that public health work will be elevated to a zenith in few years from now; and as soon as Albania gets on her feet, with such initiative as shown by the American foundations she will undoubtedly carry on this innovated work to such an extent that malaria, and other infectious diseases, as well as communicable diseases will be but minor public health problems to be met.

One thing of interest that struck me, as I was reading the annual report for 1933, of the Rockefeller Foundation, that at Durazzo a distinct "success was achieved in the control of the malaria vector (*Anapholes maculipennis elutus*) by the salinification of a lagoon in which it bred in large numbers. This mosquito is of a type that doesn't breed in salt water, and by rendering its favorite breeding place salty, the problem of its control was solved. Such an experience happened to be possible in this particular area, and is an illustration of the strictly local, and sometimes unique measures that may be employed in malaria prevention".

## Conclusion

In the foregoing pages, you have a vivid picture of Public health activities as carried on jointly by the Government and the Rockefeller Foundation. The once malarial infested regions have now become suitable places for habitation .

Albania is a country where one religion is as good as another; and the three dominant religions in the country---Mohammedanism, Orthodox and Orthodox Catholics, and Roman Catholicism, are so much in harmony with one another that, it is often asserted , Albania is the only country known to-day to be the possessor of such religious harmony. Members of different denomination visit each other's churches without causing any undue feeling. Consequently the cooperation rendered to various health activities, and other governmental affairs is looked as tho it will make Albania a more unified nation, and raise her on the same level with those of other Balkan nations.

A little light on nationalism was shed during President Wilson's administration on all the minor nations of Europe . As a result of the "fourteen points" of President Wilson, Albania, too, became to be somewhat recognized as a nation, tho centuries old, with outstanding nationalistic tendencies. So Albania became to be recognized by the world as the representative of the old Illyrians, tho there are nations even to-day that refuse to recognize Albanian nationalism---and merely state as being part of Greece and Yugoslavia. The due credit to United States is constantly apparent in all of the Albanians' minds; and U.S. is accorded right now the greatest respect than to any other nation existing to-date. Because if it hadn't been for the interest shown by the late President Wilson, Albania as well as other smaller nations would not have been

liberated as yet from the dominating major powers.

There are in residence in U.S. now some 20,000 Albanians, the major part of them having emigrated from Albania as a result of the Turkish domination due to deprived political rights and freedom; with the rest as mere immigrants seeking their fortunes in the American industries. With the coming of these immigrants, the educational institutions have been pursued with the purpose of elevating Albania from the primitive <sup>one</sup> stage into a more modern nation, and with the purpose of applying the American principles of Government, Education, and Public Health as acquired in the United States of America. Many of these immigrants have become naturalized because of the uncertainty of the existence of Albania as an independent nation .

Due credit must be paid to the Rockefeller Fondation in the wide interest that she has displayed in development of better methods for combatting diseases, especially , Malaria, the scourge of the country. Finally, equal respect must also be accorded to the League of Nations, because much good work on health has been made available to the country, somewhat along the similar paths as the Rockefeller Fondation; and Albania has now risen as a country of importance, being the key to the Near East; and the stimulus injected already directly and indirectly thru the medium of these foreign fondations will restore Albania, the smallest Kingdom (limited monarchy) in the World on par with the rest of the European countries.

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